

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 DODE-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 AID-10 PRS-01 SNM-02

OMB-01 ACDA-10 IO-03 DRC-01 /080 W

----- 109335

R 281215Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9356

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 20036

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, TH

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON PRIME MINISTER

1. I SPENT ABOUT 15 MINUTES THIS AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 28, IN WHAT WAS BILLED AS A COURTESY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER SANYA. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY FOREIGN MINISTER CHAROONPHAN AND I BY DCM MASTERS. SINCE THE PLEASANTRIES HAD ALREADY BEEN GOTTEN OUT OF THE WAY AT AN EARLIER SOCIAL MEETING WITH SANYA, I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE CALL TO FIRST COMMENT ON THE MORNING'S OPENING BY THE KING OF THE NEW NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (SEPTEL). AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF ONE OF THE OLDEST EXISTING CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACIES, I TOLD HIM THAT OUR GOVERNMENT WAS FOLLOWING TH*ILAND'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT WITH AFFECTIONATE INTEREST AND SUPPORT.

SUBSEQUENTLY I OBSERVED THAT THE FACT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER AND I WERE NEW AT OUR RESPECTIVE POSITIONS PROVIDED AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR BOTH COUNTRIES TO REVIEW THEIR PAST RELATIONS WITH THE AIM OF TRYING TO IMPROVE WHAT HAS
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BEEN A CORDIAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE RECORD.

2. I THEN RAISED THE FOLLOWING SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS:

(A) SUPPORT FOR SANYA GOVERNMENT. I EXPRESSED TO THE PRIME MINISTER OUR AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEMS HE FACES IN GOVERNING THAILAND AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME AND CONVEYED TO HIM OUR FULL SUPPORT FOR HIS EFFORTS TO PUT THAILAND ON THE ROAD TO DEMOCRATIC RULE. DRAWING ON MY OWN ACADEMIC BACKGROUND, I NOTED THAT THIS IS A MOST INTERESTING TIME FOR ANYONE TO BE IN THAILAND AND PARTICULARLY SOMEONE INTERESTED IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT HE COULD COUNT ON OUR HELP FOR HIS EFFORTS AND REITERATED THAT HE SHOULD LET US KNOW IF THERE WERE WAYS IN WHICH WE COULD BE USEFUL. THE PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION AND SAID HE WOULD MOST CERTAINLY DO SO.

(B) U.S. PRESENCE. I CONVEYED OUR DEEP APPRECIATION FOR THAILAND'S HELP OVER MANY YEARS IN OUR MUTUAL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE STABILITY IN THE INDOCHINA AREA AND NOTED THAT, WHILE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, THE STRUGGLE IS NOT YET ENDED. THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ARE CONTINUING TO STRENGTHEN THEIR FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM, AND MILITARY ATTACKS ON THE GOVERNMENT IN PHNOM PENH ARE INCREASING. IN THIS SITUATION, WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT WE NOT SIGNAL TO HANOI ANY REDUCTION IN THE U.S. DETERMINATION TO ACHIEVE A SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT TO THE WAR. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT FOR BOTH COUNTRIES THAT WE NOT WEAKEN THE DETERRENT EFFECT OF OUR MILITARY FORCES IN THAILAND.

(C) AT THE SAME TIME, WE RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE PRESSURES IN THAILAND TO MAKE SOME REDUCTIONS IN OUR PRESENCE, PARTICULARLY IN THOSE AREAS NOT ESSENTIAL FOR COMBAT ACTIVITY. WITHIN THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS WE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SUPREME COMMAND THE WITHDRAWAL OF A SQUADRON OF AIRCRAFT USED TO PROVIDE ELECTRONIC SUPPORT. REMOVAL OF THESE PLANES WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT OUR DETERRENT CAPABILITY. WE PLAN TO BEGIN THESE WITHDRAWALS ON JANUARY 2 AND ARE DISCUSSING WITH THE SUPREME COMMAND THE TEXT OF A PRESS STATEMENT WITH THE RTG MAY WISH TO ISSUE. WE WOULD HOPE THAT THIS STATEMENT WOULD NOT BE ISSUED

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UNTIL THE PLANES ACTUALLY START TO LEAVE. THE PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THIS INFORMATION BUT MADE NO FURTHER COMMENT.

(D) NARCOTICS. I ALSO TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT PRESIDENT NIXON REMAINS DETERMINED TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO CURB THE FLOW OF DANGEROUS DRUGS INTO THE UNITED STATES. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE COOPERATION WE HAVE RECEIVED

FROM THAILAND IN ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAMS WHICH ARE
IN OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS. I NOTED THAT WE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING
WITH THE THAI GOVERNMENT THE PROVISION OF HELICOPTERS AND
OTHER EQUIPMENT TO HELP IMPROVE THAILAND'S ABILITY TO
INTERDICT THE FLOW OF OPIATES FROM BURMA AND EXPRESSED
THE HOPE THAT OUR CLOSE COOPERATION WOULD CONTINUE AND
INTENSIFY. THE PRIME MINISTER AGREED.

(E) INSURGENCY. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT ONE MATTER
ON WHICH I WISHED TO BECOME MORE FAMILIAR WITH THE THAI
INSURGENCY. I SAID THAT I HAD NO PRECONCEIVED IDEAS ON
THIS BUT, CONSIDERING THE EXPENDITURE OF MONEY AND OTHER
RESOURCES BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS OVER MANY YEARS, FELT IT
DESERVED CAREFUL ATTENTION. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT I
WAS SCHEDULED TO HAVE A BRIEFING ON THE INSURGENCY BY GENERAL
SAIYUD FROM THE COMMUNIST SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS COMMAND ON
FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT IT MIGHT BE
POSSIBLE FOR US AT SOME POINT TO CONSIDER THIS TOGETHER.
(GENERAL SAIYUD TOLD ME HE HAS BEEN UNABLE TO SEE THE PRIME
MINISTER TO BRIEF HIM ON THE INSURGENCY AND ASKED US TO DO WHAT
WE COULD TO BRING ABOUT A JOINT BRIEFING WHICH WOULD FORCE
THE PRIME MINISTER TO FOCUS ON THIS PROBLEM. I HAVE LAID
THE GROUNDWORK FOR THIS, BUT AM NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT SANYA
WILL TAKE THE BAID).

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 20036

LIMDIS

3. FOR HIS PART PRIME MINISTER SANYA:

(A) INQUIRED ABOUT THE CURRENT SECURITY SITUATION IN VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND LAOS AND EXPRESSED CONTINUED CONCERN ABOUT THE CHINESE ROAD IN NORTHERN LAOS. IN THE LATTER RESPECT VIENTIANE 8721 WAS PARTICULARLY TIMELY AND ENABLED ME TO INFORM THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE REMOVAL OF HEAVY AAA WEAPONS FROM THESE ROADS AND TO MENTION IN GENERAL TERMS OTHER INDICATIONS OF PEACEFUL PRC ACTIVITY IN LAOS. I MENTIONED ALSO THAT THE PRC HAS ITS OWN INTERESTS IN A STABLE LAOS AND HAS A CERTAIN IDENTITY OF INTEREST WITH US IN CONTAINING THE INFLUENCE OF HANOI.

(B) THE PRIME MINISTER ASKED ALSO ABOUT COOPERATION IN THE INTERDICTION OF NARCOTICS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BURMA. THE DCM SAID WE HAVE NOTED A CONSIDERABLE CHANGE IN GUB ATTITUDES WITHIN THE PAST SIX MONTHS. THE BURMESE ARE BECOMING CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR OWN NARCOTICS' PROBLEM AND HAVE MADE A NUMBER OF MOVES TO INTERDICT THE TRAFFIC ALONG THE THAI BORDER. THEY ARE ALSO FAR MORE WILLING TO TALK WITH US AND

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WITH THE UN ABOUT THIS PROBLEM. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE DCM SAID THAT LITTLE HAS BEEN DONE AS YET IN BURMA TO END THE GROWING OF OPIUM POPPIES. THE PRIME MINISTER AGREED AND NOTED THAT THE AREAS IN WHICH POPPIES ARE GROWN ARE LARGELY OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT'S CONTROL.

(C) INTERESTINGLY, HE ALSO ASKED ABOUT THE STUDENTS' VISIT TO OUR EMBASSY ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, AND WHAT THEY WANTED. I TOLD HIM THEY HAD RAISED THE OLD SEMI-MARXIAN THESIS THAT THE INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS WERE EXPLOITING THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND THAT I WAS PREPARED TO DISCUSS THIS QUESTION WITH THEM AT SOME FUTURE TIME. I ALSO COMMENTED ON THE GENERALLY DECOROUS BEHAVIOR OF THE THAI STUDENTS AT THIS MEETING IN CONTRAST TO THE BEHAVIOR OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES FROM MALAYSIA AND AUSTRALIA.

4. COMMENT: THE PRIME MINISTER WAS FRIENDLY AND FORTHCOMING. THE DECEMBER 28 PRESS QUOTES HIM AS SAYING HE IS HAVING TROUBLE SLEEPING BECAUSE OF THE MANY PROBLEMS HE FACES. IF SO, HE SHOWED NO ILL EFFECTS DURING MY CALL. THE PRIME MINISTER IMPRESSED ME AS A GOOD MAN WHOSE INSTINCTS ARE RIGHT AND WHOSE JUDGMENT IS SOUND. WHETHER HE HAS THE DRIVE AND DECISIVENESS TO MEET THAILAND'S PROBLEMS REMAINS TO BE SEEN. I BELIEVE I HAVE ESTABLISHED A GOOD OPENING

WITH HIM AND WILL SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP THIS IN
THE FUTURE.
KINTNER

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